

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to voice my strong opposition to the Camas Station development. It is a monumental step backward for safe passage of the children of Camas, and I am here tonight to speak on their behalf.

Camas Station will have a severely detrimental impact on the neighbors in the area, especially on the children of Prune Hill Elementary School. Increased traffic leading to and at the intersection will put hundreds of lives at risk, especially during morning and afternoon pick up and drop off times at school. The opportunities for children to get hit by cars will certainly increase as they cross what is already a busy intersection.

I raise my hand as a witness— and ask others in the room to also raise their hands— who have witnessed multiple near misses of pedestrians getting hit. Prune Hill Elementary crossing guards and even Camas police officers who have monitored the morning commute say that it is a very difficult challenge to help students cross safely when so many drivers notoriously and inattentively drive through that intersection. I have personally peeled an orange pylon cone off the front bumper of a driver who ran one over and continued driving unaware she had hit anything while walking my child to school.

The current situation will be adversely compounded by increased gas station traffic. It will be even worse for children trying to cross by themselves at dusk, evening, and on weekends when there is no crossing guard on duty.

There was mention at the Camas Design Review Committee about the proposed pedestrian pathways and the landscape screening of parking spaces. But there was no discussion at all about how little children are going to see cars backing up and pulling out of spaces that are artfully disguised by plants! The cars need to be in full view as kids are leaving Prune Hill Elementary and cutting through the parking lot--avoiding the pedestrian pathways-- to buy candy, ice cream, and other junk food at the convenience store, or using the 16th Avenue sidewalk to walk home.

If the same level of importance about landscaping and design had been given to the fact there are children everywhere in this proposed scenario, this project would not be moving forward.

Children and their families who use the Prune Hill Sports Park track and ball fields will also be negatively impacted by increased traffic and resulting auto pollution. Many families park on NW 16th Avenue alongside the field with young children darting in and out of cars.

Prune Hill Elementary students who walk to and from school already smell and taste significant car exhaust pollution, especially during the colder months when the exhaust lingers in the air along Brady Road. With increased traffic coming to Camas Station, this toxic problem will only get worse. Exhaust from cars lining up at the light on Brady Road to turn into Camas Station and more cars waiting in the drive-thru and car wash lanes will exacerbate the problem even more.

It is worth mentioning that commuters to Odyssey Middle School and Discovery High School will also be negatively impacted by Camas Station--it does not affect only the elementary school community. Students in K-12 will be at risk.

Due to the nature of businesses at Camas Station---gas pumps, car wash, and drive-thru---the primary mode of customers to this location is by car. Cars already speed well above the 35 mph limit, and this is likely to continue as more cars access Brady Road and 16th to access these services. All of these services exist on 192nd Avenue, which is the next major street to the west. We do not need more gas stations, more car washes, and more drive-thrus on this corner of Prune Hill.

I know that this area is zoned commercial, but there are many other types of commercial businesses that would be better suited to this particular parcel of land that would have less negative impact on the neighborhood. It would be better to have businesses that cater to walkers or bicycle riders. There is nothing sustainable about a car wash or a gas station. Both demand the repeated use of precious natural resources---this is not Earth-friendly. The applicant checked "songbirds" as wildlife affected by this development, but he forgot to check birds of prey, migratory birds such as geese, and deer among others. Perhaps this is because he lives in Las Vegas and not on Prune Hill.

I want to speak for a moment specifically about the zoning codes. This parcel is zoned CC, Community Commercial. It is NOT zoned NC, Neighborhood Commercial. Camas City Code 18.05.050 Commercial and Industrial Zones reads that an NC Neighborhood

Commercial zone provides for the day-to-day needs of the immediate neighborhood. This zone is intended to be small, but fairly numerous throughout the city. Convenience goods (e.g. food, drugs, and sundries) along with personal services (e.g. dry cleaning, barbershop, or beauty shop) are common goods and services offered. This to me sounds like a gas station convenience store.

This parcel is actually zoned Community Commercial. This zone provides for the goods and services of longer-term consumption, and tends to be higher-priced items than the neighborhood commercial zone district. Typical goods include clothing, hardware, and appliance sales. Some professional services are offered, e.g. real estate offices or banks. Eating and drinking establishments may also be provided. Community Commercial does NOT sound like gasoline. That is a day-to-day need and should be placed in a NC zone.

You might be wondering about the conditional use permit. The criteria is spelled out in Camas Municipal Code 18.43.050. This is a permit approval procedure for unusual or unique types of land uses which, due to their nature, require special consideration of the impact on the neighborhood and land uses in the vicinity.

The hearings examiner shall be guided by all of the following criteria in granting or denying a conditional use permit:

A. The proposed use will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare, or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity of the proposed use, or in the district in which the subject property is situated;

B. The proposed use shall meet or exceed the development standards that are required in the zoning district in which the subject property is situated;

C. The proposed use shall be compatible with the surrounding land uses in terms of traffic and pedestrian circulation, density, building, and site design;

D. Appropriate measures have been taken to minimize the possible adverse impacts that the proposed use may have on the area in which it is located;

E. The proposed use is consistent with the goals and policies expressed in the comprehensive plan;

F. Any special conditions and criteria established for the proposed use have been satisfied. In granting a conditional use permit the hearings examiner may stipulate additional requirements to carry out the intent of the Camas Municipal Code and comprehensive plan.

Other types of commercial business that would do well in this location include:

Daycare center
Music school
Martial arts studio
Real estate office
Florist
Clothing boutique
Gift shop
Toy store
Bookstore
Art gallery

None of which require drive-thrus, would encourage walkers and cyclists, and not pollute the environment to the same degree as a gas station.

Camas Station is materially detrimental to the public welfare and it is injurious to the vicinity of proposed use. And it has not minimized the potential adverse effects that its proposed use will have on the area in which it is located. Thus, the hearing examiner should deny the conditional use permit. I call upon the City of Camas to abandon its approval of Camas Station as it appears in the meeting packet and find an alternative development opportunity that is mindful of the needs of children and families in our neighborhood.

Submitted by Gwen Tuason, 4323 Nw 12th Loop, Camas, WA 98607 on July 26, 2022